

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

J. A. RIDENOUR.

The more we contemplate Christianity as taught by Christ through the Gospel, the more we are infatuated with its beauty, and overwhelmed with its grandeur and sublimity.

Jesus said, "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." And Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." By this power the sinner is, not only transformed and renewed, but by the same power he is "kept unto salvation."

History abounds with happy instances of the great change wrought by the power of God, in the hearts and lives of the most wicked and degraded of mankind. It affects those in high stations as well.

That noted Ohio lawyer, Judge McLean, afterward one of the justices of the United States Supreme Court, once had the question of personal religion urged upon him by a friend. Feeling an unusual inclination to settle the matter finally one way or the other, he locked his office door and secluded himself within. With the code of codes before him, he meditated for hours the question of duty as it applied to him.

Along that journey of serious inquiry so many have gone before and since, this thoughtful jurist went. As carefully as was his custom, he briefed the law and facts of this tremendous issue. Universal sin, the universal need of a Saviour from sin, Jesus, the only name given among men, belief in that Saviour needful, repentance for past wrongs required, confession of that faith enjoined—works to follow and attest the faith—now the accepted time. Then he humbly knelt among his law-books and submitted his heart and life to the highest law of all enactments.

He returned to his home a changed and happier man. It is said his wife met him at the door, and he told her the new purpose of his soul. "Call the family together," said he, "and we will engage in prayer." His wife informed him that several lawyers were waiting to consult with him in the sitting-room, and urged him to hold prayer in the kitchen. He said: "I have never before invited Christ into my home, and I will not entertain him in the kitchen." To the lawyers he said: "I have just determined to be a Christian and to begin right by prayer in my home; if you do not desire to be present, you may retire." They courteously remained, and at least one of them was by that service influenced to turn to the

same Saviour who had blessed the whole-hearted obedience of Judge McLean.

Orville Gardner, better known as "Awful" Gardner, whom John B. Gough says, in his dissolute days, was the worst man in New York city. Prize fighter, gambler, and drunkard. Changed through the influence of his mother's prayers and the power of God's spirit, he chose Christ as his pattern and master, and lived an exemplary life for years and died the death of the righteous.

What is that shining in a dark and dangerous quarter of the New York metropolis? That is the Water street mission of Jerry McAuley. A wharf-rat as a boy, a thief and cut-throat as a man, McAuley heard the Gospel call and was mustered into the Christian army in a Sing Sing prison cell, and after a mighty struggle became so firmly grounded on the Rock of Ages, that he was able by God's blessed help to rescue hundreds of degraded men from the swirl of sin and start them on the way of truth; and when he came to die, the most eloquent preachers of the metropolis pronounced his eulogies, and the wealthiest citizens mingled their tears with the humblest, at the open coffin of one whom the Gospel of Christ had not only mightily saved, but used so mightily for saving other lost and ruined men.

Who makes that eloquent plea for total abstinence? His name is Gough, and his victorious years spent as a conqueror over the most imperious appetite that drags men to destruction, are a tribute to the power of the Gospel to save and hold those who accept its reasonable claims upon them.

How different from this and terrible the fore-bodings of those who come to die themselves, or witness the departure of their friends who have not been rescued by the Gospel of the Son of God.

A few years ago the most noted infidel in our country pronounced a funeral oration by the grave-side of his brother. These were his consoling words: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry."

Voltaire under similar circumstances said: "In man there is more wretchedness than in all animals put together. He loves life, and yet he knows he must die. If he enjoys a transient good he suffers various evils, and is at last devoured by worms. I wish I had never been born."

How different from this does Jesus teach, he says: "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many man-

sions. I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may also be."

Sad indeed were the last hours of the celebrated Dr. Paulus, a professor of Heidelberg. He was an atheist, who denied everything supernatural, including the immortality of the soul. When his last illness began he said he was about to die and that would be the end of him. In this gloomy expectancy he calmly awaited the last act of the fatal tragedy. For some hours he lay in a speechless coma. It was thought he had spoken his last word, but suddenly his eyes opened and he raised them toward the ceiling as if he saw some startling vision, some revelation bursting upon his dying sight, and, raising his head with a convulsive effort, he exclaimed: "There is another life!" and he was gone. Let us make this discovery, and reasonably act in view of it, by choosing the Lord Jesus Christ and his Gospel; and let us make that choice now, before by any chance or hazard it is everlastingly too late.

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CONFERENCE THOUGHTS.

J. O. TALLEY.

How about the National Convention anyhow? Why can't we have a whole week's convention? Some of us out west do not much relish the idea of spending so much money to attend only a three days' convention. Why not have a whole week's program?

Here we, the King's Children are begging for a day on the program. We want a day and an evening, and we want it badly. We do not think it best to run two parallel conventions. Will you give us this time?

And there is our Ministerial Association. Why cannot we give a day to that? We want a National Ministerial meeting at Ashland, why can't we have it? What is our Ministerial Board doing anyhow? If we would have things *move, fire up, get up steam*. Let us have a general conventional assembly of all our church functions. And there is the Sister's Society. Well, if they want anything let them get up and ask for it.

Why cannot we have well prepared papers on leading themes, and important subjects, historical, doctrinal, critical, etc., etc.

The minister who preaches from two to three sermons each Sunday in the year, attends two to three extra meetings during each week, preaches nearly every night for two or three months during the winter, wants a vacation, and would like to spend a full week or two where we can hear others talk. And I know of no place in which I can take more delight than in such a convention.